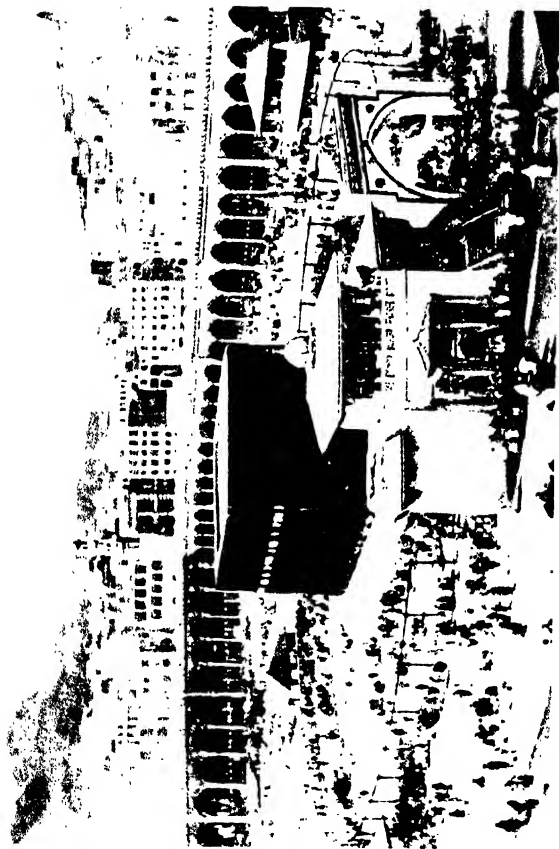






## THE HOLY KA'BA



THE SACRED HOUSE OF ALLAH AT MECCA WHICH IS VISITED  
YEARLY BY MILLIONS OF MUSLIMS FROM EVERY

*David Baran Mukerji,*  
*1 College Row, Calcutta,*  
MOTHERS OF THE FAITHFUL

*(Being a Discourse on Polygamy with a  
Biographical Sketch of the Wives of  
Muhammad refuting the allegations  
of the non-Muslims against them  
and the Prophet himself.)*

BY  
SYED M. H. ZAIDI



CALCUTTA  
1935

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# CONTENTS

	PAGE
Subscribers list . . . . .	iv
Dedication . . . . .	ix
Preface . . . . .	1
Preliminary Discourse . . . . .	8

## PART I (WIVES)

Khadija . . . . .	23
Sauda . . . . .	31
Ayesha . . . . .	35
Hafsa . . . . .	43
Zainab bint Khuzaima . . . . .	49
Omm Salma . . . . .	53
Zainab bint Jahsh . . . . .	57
Juwairiyah . . . . .	63
Safia . . . . .	67
Omm Habiba . . . . .	73
Maimuna . . . . .	77

## PART II (CONCUBINES)

Raihana . . . . .	83
Mary the Copt . . . . .	87
Appendix I (Succession of wives) . . . . .	93
Appendix II (Muhammad's children) . . . . .	95
Bibliography . . . . .	97
By the same Author . . . . .	xi



# ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
The Holy Ka'ba      ...      ...	<i>Frontispiece</i>
Al-Haj Seth Qassim Ali Jairazbhoy facing	ix
The Author      ...      ...      ,,      ...	1
Qubbatul Khozra      ...      ...      ,,      ...	3
Jannatul-Moalla      ...      ...      ,,      ...	25
Jannatul-Baqi      ...      ...      ,,      ...	96





MIRZA SAIF QASIM ALI FARAZBHOY OF BOMBAY

THIS WORK  
IS  
MOST RESPECTFULLY  
DEDICATED  
TO  
Al-Haj Seth Qassim Ali Jairazbhoy  
OF  
BOMBAY  
BY  
HIS HUMBLE ADMIRER  
THE AUTHOR

گر قبول افتد زہے عز و شرف

## DEDICATION.

Every educated gentleman knows Al-Haj Seth Qassim Ali Jairazbhoy, the great Muslim philanthropist of Bombay 'whose constant thoughts are to see the Islamic literature flourish and misrepresentations vanish from the fair face of Islam and its Holy Prophet.' His amiable disposition, his civil and courteous behaviour, his love of learning and the learned, his kind feelings towards the poor and the needy, his unbounded generosity towards all, irrespective of caste and creed, clime and country, are known to one and all.

His learning and scholarship, his calm dignity and lovable personality, have won him the esteem and confidence of all officials and non-officials who have ever come in contact with him.

As a friend of the poor, and as an equal of the great, he has the heart to relieve the needs of the former, and a tact to command the respect of the latter. Again, as a private gentleman, and as a public figure, he knows well how to win the heart and command the respect of every friend and foe. Once again, as a writer of fame and as a merchant-prince, he has the genius to impress his views and multiply commercial emoluments.

However much one speaks of his virtues and achievements, it will be less and inadequate. While fully aware of the fact that the inscription of my humble work to him will never make a fitting tribute to his manifold accomplishments, I dedicate it to this typical Muslim gentleman in token of my admiration for him and his activities.





THE AUTHOR

## *PREFACE.*

THE first object of this book is to explain to the non-Muslims, especially the European Christians, the circumstances connected with Muhammad's numerous spousals after the death of his first wife, the noble Khadija.

The second object is to inspire my sisters-in-Islam with higher ideals and greater things by putting before them some of the achievements of Muhammad's wives. A knowledge of their sense of duty and work, chastity and decorum, self-respect and composure ; fidelity to faith and obligation ; continence under scarcity and profusion ; resignation in war and peace ; steadfastness under persecution and in exile ; duty towards husband and children, family and relation, country and nation ; and, above all, a wholehearted devotedness towards Allah and His Apostle will serve as an inspiration even to the less sensitive daughters of the Mothers of the Faithful ; and urge them on to the path of glory and renown and to all



that is noble and praiseworthy in the eyes of man and Allah.

S. M. H. Z.

"KING'S PALACE,"  
GARDEN REACH, CALCUTTA,  
*September 1934.*

*P. S.*—I would be ungrateful if I did not acknowledge my indebtedness to the Hon'ble Nawab Saheb Bahadur of Bhikampur for his graciously helping me on several occasions in printing some of my previous works.

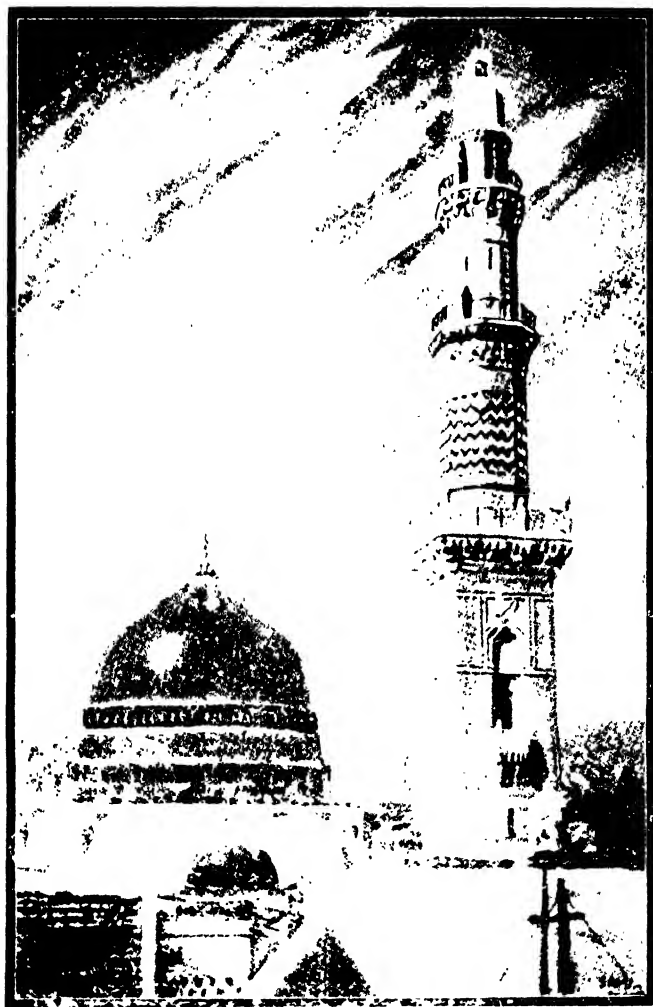
I should also point out that the book was to be published early in September 1934 but the proof sheets were unduly retained by Sir Hassan Suhrawardy whom I had requested to honour my humble work with a Foreword. But far from acceding to my request he did not even care to extend his simple courtesy of replying to any of the seven reminders sent to him. He did not return the proof sheets despite my requests, nay entreaties, and thus not only enhanced my difficulties in bringing out this book but also caused substantial loss.

*January 1935.*

S. M. H. Z.



QUBBATUL-KHOZRA



THE TOMB OF THE HOLY PROPHET OF ISLAM AT MEDINA.

David banu Mukji.-  
1 College Row, Calcutta.

## PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE

THE charge of advocating polygamy has been made against the Arabian Prophet, but it were well if his critics cared to remember the state of society he came in. Polyandry was practised to excess from time immemorial. Prostitution was patronised at all events as a necessary institution, and keeping of mistresses was in vogue in the same manner as it is now in many of the civilized countries. A doctrine similar to the *niyog* of the Arya Samaj had also an existence. A married woman was always at liberty to demand of any man sexual intercourse to obtain generous offspring by him, and everywhere such immorality reigned supreme. Other evils and unnatural and horrible customs affecting the matrimonial connections existed for centuries before the Holy Prophet of Islam and incestuous marriages were rife in every part of Arabia. It was the common custom for the son to inherit along with other properties the wives of his father and marry them himself. "There was no limit," says Bosworth Smith, "to

the number of women a man could marry, and they were a part of the property divided among the heirs of the deceased person.”<sup>1</sup>

“Polygamy was the ineradicable demand for male offspring in the East ; nor did his permission of it, under the conditions he enforced, add to its strength.”<sup>2</sup>

The most he could do was to put a check on the unlimited polygamy of the Arabs, by prohibiting them their mothers, aunts, etc.<sup>3</sup> and by limiting the number of wives to four a man could marry under unavoidable circumstances provided he could do and show equal justice and love to them all while ‘prescribing monogamy for all who could not act equitably and justly towards and make proper provision for more than one wife’,<sup>4</sup> and thus closing practically the door of polygamy to the vast majority of Muhammadans ; so that ‘in a greater measure polygamy is much more a theoretical than a practical institution.’<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Bosworth Smith*, pp. 201-202.

<sup>2</sup> *Samuel Johnson*, p. 600.

<sup>3</sup> *Qur'an*, 4: 23.

<sup>4</sup> *Martin*, p. 263—64.

<sup>5</sup> *Leonard*, p. 130-31, also *cf. Rice*, pp. 96-97.

We find in the Holy Quoran: "Take in marriage such women as pleases you, two, or three, or four, *and not more*. But if you fear that ye cannot act equitably *towards so many*<sup>6</sup> (and surely it is not in your power to act equitably and justly towards women although ye fain would do<sup>7</sup> . . .; and God has not given a man two hearts within him)<sup>8</sup> marry one only, or what you have already got under your hands,—that is the best thing—that ye act not unjustly."

"Rich as well as pious men all around him, whether Jew or Gentile had each often a score and more number of wives, and neither Jehovah nor Allah had here imposed restrictions. Muhammad was the first to do so; and he added strict commands as to all wives having substantial rights and kindly treatment."<sup>10</sup>

"On the unlimited polygamy which produced this state of things Muhammad put a check; he directed that a man could only enter into the marriage contract with two, three, or four wives, if he could behave

<sup>6</sup> Quoran, 4: 3.

<sup>7</sup> Quoran, 4: 129.

<sup>8</sup> Quoran, 33: 4.

<sup>9</sup> Quoran, 4: 3.

<sup>10</sup> Forlong.

with equal justice and equal love to them all.

“Unless he could do that he was only permitted to marry one wife. Now as particularly, no one can be, as a rule, equally fair and loving to two or more wives, the spirit of Muhammad’s legislation is clearly in favour of monogamy.”<sup>11</sup>

Apart from what has already been mentioned above if the critics of Muhammad’s life pause to reflect they would find still some good underlying polygamy. “It tends to provide for the surplus female population in the few places where there is such surplus,”<sup>12</sup> puts a check on prostitution—one of the three curses of Christian land<sup>13</sup>—and its attending evils, and it is a sure protection against illegitimacy of birth.<sup>14</sup>

If under such abnormal conditions polygamy is not allowed, the society becomes corrupt, results in immoral sexual intercourse and eventually unmarried mothers, war babies and natural children become part of it. Under such circumstance poly-

<sup>11</sup> *Leitner*, p. 297.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Cf. *The Nineteenth Century*, Feb., 1894; and Taylor.

<sup>14</sup> *Leitner*, p. 297, also cf. *Besant*, pp. 43-46.

gamy is the only effective preventive and safeguard against moral turpitude.

Muhammadans "look upon polygamy as a remedy of many evils, and they are not far wrong, says Max Muller. In all that concerns the great leader we must remember the land, circumstances and ways of the desert, its rulers and wild men of the 7th century."<sup>15</sup>

The evils of celibacy, which civilized nations have awakened to realise now, was condemned by Muhammad 14 hundred years ago. He condemned it not only by his personal example but also by precepts. "There is no monasticism in Islam,"<sup>16</sup> and it is largely due to this teaching that there are few marriageable women that are not married.<sup>17</sup>

"The Muhammadans have no taverns, gaming-house or brothals, nor have they any idea of legalising prostitution,"<sup>18</sup> as it is done in many of the civilized lands to-day. "Muslim society," says Leonard, "may compare very favourably with European. Taken in the mass, the polygamous

<sup>15</sup> Also cf. *Forlong*, p. 480.

<sup>16</sup> *Nicholson*, p. 225; and *Quoran*, 57: 27.

<sup>17</sup> *Leitner*, p. 299.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*



Muslim is every whit as moral—more so in fact—than his English, French, or German contemporary.”<sup>19</sup>

Adultery is punished equally in both the sexes. The culprit to his great exposure and shame when testified to by four witnesses,<sup>20</sup> is flogged with a hundred stripes publicly. A punishment extreme in its nature and unfailing in its efficacy to render detestible the very idea of duplicating the perpetration of a similar crime.

“It is not Muhammad whom we must blame for these evils, polygamy and divorce ; it is the state of society which demanded the separation of the sexes, and which it was not safe to allow men and women to associate freely ; in other words, it was sensual constitution of the Arabs that lay at the root of the matter . . . still he did something towards bettering the condition of women.”<sup>21</sup>

“Muhammad acted the part of a patriot and statesman by combating to such extent as he could the unlimited polygamy of the tribes ; their common massacre or

<sup>19</sup> *Leonard*, p. 130.

<sup>20</sup> *Quoran*, 4: 15.

<sup>21</sup> *Lanes's selections from the Quoran*.

burial alive of female children, and the treatment of all women as mere chattels ; they could like cattle be seized by the strongest. Their fate as slaves in his day was indeed worse than of cattle, and polygamy was to them an inspeakable benefit. He therefore ruled that 'men might marry upto four wives each provided they could love and do justly by them.'<sup>22</sup> Nor is the result bad ; for Muhammadan family life compares favourably with Christian, alike in affection, purity, and peace, and has infinitely fewer divorce cases and scandals."<sup>23</sup>

To be more brief on the point I would quote Rev. Canon Isaac Taylor who wrote: "Polygamy is a most difficult question. Moses did not prohibit it. It was practised by David, and it is not directly forbidden in the New Testament.

"Muhammad limited the unbounded licence of polygamy ; it is the exception rather than the rule in the most civilized Muslim lands, European Turkey, Algiers, and Egypt. Polygamy, with all its evils, has its counterbalancing advantages. It has abolished female infanticide, and gives

<sup>22</sup> *Quoran*, 4: 3.

<sup>23</sup> *Forlong*, pp. 480-81.

every woman a legal protection. Owing to polygamy Muslim countries are free from professional outcasts, a greater reproach to Christianity, than polygamy to Islam. The strictly regulated polygamy of Muslim lands is infinitely less degrading to women and less injurious to men than the promiscuous polyandry which is the curse of the Christian cities, and which is absolutely unknown in Islam. The polyandrous English are not entitled to cast stones at polygamous Muslims."<sup>21</sup>

Will it not be wise for the critics of Muhammad's life "first to pluck out the beam from their own eyes, before they meddle with the mote in their brother's eye?"

Now, when I have shown that the Holy Prophet of Islam was not in favour of polygamy or plurality of marriage, I would pass on to the much traduced question of the Prophet's sensuality and voluptuousness, which has been given thick coatings of colour from strictly European paint-box so as to present to the world an abominable caricature of Muhammad's nature and

<sup>21</sup> Cf. *The Times*, October 8th, 1887.

character, and in this way keep people disgusted of him lest they would mix and be assimilated in the folds of Islam.

A large number of European biographers of our Prophet have accused him also of being a sensualist and voluptuary ; and apparently with ignoble motives they have made to wear the appearance of deep guilt even what was comparatively and demonstratively innocent and sincere about him. I would not attempt here to go far into lengthy discourse on the point and would prefer to give below the remarks of some non-Muslim scholars which would remove the misinterpretation placed by Christians upon the nature of the Prophet's numerous marriages after Hazrat Khadija's death ; and would show, to use the words of Max Muller, that "nothing is more erroneous than accusing the Prophet of sensuality."

"The real cause of his many marriages at an old age was charity, and in order to protect the widows of his persecuted followers. The idea that the Prophet had any improper intention in so doing is without foundation ; especially if we consider

that he had given abundant proof during his youth of continence."<sup>25</sup>

"Several of his alliances," contends Margoliouth, "were political in character, the Prophet being anxious to bind his chief followers more and more closely to himself. This was doubtless his object in marrying the daughters of Abu Bakr and Omar ; while a political motive of a different sort is to be found in his alliances with the daughters of political opponents or fallen enemies. Victory over an enemy would seem to have been consummated only when the enemy's daughter was introduced into the conqueror's harem."<sup>26</sup>

And some of his marriages have arisen chiefly from his extreme anxiety to have a male issue.<sup>27</sup>

"He was," says Badger, "frugal in his habits, generous and liberal, faithful to his associates, treasured up the loving memory of absent and departed friends, and awaited last summons with fortitude and submission. That he entertained an excessive

<sup>25</sup> *Leitner*, pp. 298-99.

<sup>26</sup> *Margoliouth*, pp. 176-77 ; also *cf.* *Enc. of Rel. and Ethics*, vol. 8, p. 879.

<sup>27</sup> *Cf.* *Margoliouth*, p. 177 ; *Davenport*, p. 26 ; and *Lane-Poole, Studies, etc.*, p. 78.

passion for women, was lustful, if you will, cannot be denied ; but the fourteen wives whom from first to the last he married and his eleven concubines, figure favourably by the side of David's six wives and numerous concubines,<sup>28</sup> Solomon's 700 wives and 300 concubines,<sup>29</sup> and Rehoboams's eighteen wives and sixty concubines,<sup>30</sup> a plurality expressly forbidden to the sovereigns of Israel, who was commanded not to multiply wives to himself."<sup>31</sup>

"If we remember the 700 wives and 300 concubines of the wise Solomon, we shall applaud the modesty of the Arabian, who espoused no more than 17 or 15 wives, who occupied at Medina their separate apartments round the house of the Apostle, and enjoyed in their turns the favour of his conjugal society. What is singular enough, they were all widows, excepting one Ayesha, the daughter of Abu Bakr."<sup>32</sup>

"Muhammad himself, after all that can be said about him, was not a sensual man. We shall err widely if we consider this man

<sup>28</sup> 2 *Sam.*, v : 13 ; 1 *Chron.*, iii : 1-9 ; xiv : 3.

<sup>29</sup> 1 *Kings*, xi : 3.

<sup>30</sup> 2 *Chron.*, xi : 21.

<sup>31</sup> *Deut.*, xvii : 17 ; and *Badger*.

<sup>32</sup> *Gibbon*, Vol. III. p. 458, also *cf. Hist. of the World*, Vol. III, p. 134.

a common voluptuary intent mainly on base enjoyment—nay on enjoyment of any kind. His household was of the frugalest ; his common diet barley bread and water : sometimes for months there was not a fire once lighted on his hearth. They record with just pride that he would mend his own shoes, patch his own cloak. A poor hard-toiling, ill-provided man ; careless of what vulgar men toil for. Not a bad man, I should say ; something better in him than *hunger* of any sort—, or these wild Arab men, fighting and jostling three and twenty years at his hand, in close contact with him always, would not have revered him.”<sup>33</sup>

“Naturally pious from boyhood, Muhammad had led a pure and single life to the age of twenty-five, when he married a devoted and good woman, aged forty, who had unselfishly befriended him from childhood and amid many troubles. He was sincerely attached to Khadija and absolutely faithful to her for twenty years; only after her death did he marry again, and with others mostly widows and

<sup>33</sup> *Carlyle*, p. 95.

orphans of persecuted followers, who would have perished had he not received them into his frugal household. None could protect these but by marriage, and they abounded in his restless troubled land, the laws and circumstances of which must never be forgotten in judging this great militant Prophet . . . . we must grant that the Prophet was all round as good as he was great in heart and soul. He was certainly no sensualist, hypocrit or epileptik, though in early life delicate and at all times emotional."<sup>34</sup>

"To say that Muhammad, or any other Arab, was sensual in a higher degree than any ordinary European is simply to enounce a well-known axiom: the passion of the men of the sunland are not as those of the chill north. But to say that Muhammad was a voluptuary is false. The simple austerity of his daily life, to the very last, his hard mat for sleeping on, his plain food, self-imposed menial work, point him out as an ascetic rather than a voluptuary in most senses of the word."<sup>35</sup>

<sup>34</sup> *Forlong*, pp. 482-88 and *cf. Kennedy*, p. 218.

<sup>35</sup> *Lane's* selection from the *Quoran*; *Bosworth Smith*, p. 199, and *Lane-Poole, Studies*, p. 77.



After perusing only the facts adduced in the preceding pages about the nature of Muhammad's matrimonial alliances, it would be a vulgar mistake to suppose that the Prophet was dictated by sensual propensities to contract so many marriages. It is evident that in several of his marriages political considerations were dominant. Marriage was the implement with which, like every leader and patriarch of old, he sought to grapple closely to his side dangerous opponents or fallen enemies. Some of the wives were purely an outcome of his magnanimous compassion for the forlorn condition of widows who were either persecuted by idolators or tormented by relatives because of their new religion. If one was meant to remove misconception or clear legal ambiguity, the other was to provide for the widow of a relation or to reward the zeal of his female converts.

If one was a gift from some nobility, the other was offered by the father of the girl himself; and in several cases ladies solicited Muhammad's hand themselves.

Then again his motive in taking so many wives might well be attributed to his desire for a male issue. Had he sons,

certain it is, he would have utilised them in disarming fierce enemies and in securing the relationship of political adversaries. But all his children were daughters excepting three sons who died early in infancy.

His son by Mary might have saved the light of prophecy from extinction and perpetuated his name and mission. Had he survived, it is probable, there would have been lesser number of sects and sections, and fewer bloodsheds and martyrdoms throughout the early as well as modern history of Islamdom.<sup>36</sup>

The Arabs of his time were indignant at the rule that the Prophet married their women and did not permit them to marry his divorced wives. While God granted especial privileges to Muhammad's wives: "And when ye ask of *the Prophet's wives* what ye may have occasion for, ask *it* of them from behind a curtain. This will be more pure for your hearts and their hearts. Neither is it *fit* for you to give any uncasiness to the Apostle of God, or ever to marry his wives after him: for this would

<sup>36</sup> If I am allowed to use this word in the sense of *Islamic World*.

be a grievous thing in the sight of God,"<sup>37</sup> He laid equally stiff obligations for them to be abided by: "O wives of the Prophet, whosoever of you shall commit a manifest wickedness, their punishment *therefore* shall be doubled unto her fourfold; and this is easy with God: but whosoever of you shall be obedient unto God and His Apostle, and shall do that which is right, we will give her her reward twice, and we have prepared for her an honourable provision *in paradise*. O wives of the Prophet, ye are not as other women: if ye fear *God*, be not too complainant in speech, lest he should covet, in whose heart is a disease *of incontinence*; but speak the speech which is convenient. And sit still in your houses; and set not out yourselves with the ostentation of the former *time of ignorance*: and observe the appointed times of prayer, and give alms; and obey God, and His apostle; for God desireth only to remove from you the abomination *of vanity since ye are the household of the Prophet*, and to purify you by a *perfect purification*. And remember that which is

<sup>37</sup> *Quoran*, 88: 58.

read in your houses, of the sign of God, and of the wisdom *revealed in the Quoran* ; for God is clear-sighted ; and well acquainted with your actions.”<sup>38</sup>

Lastly God ordained that the Prophet’s wives are to be considered as “Mothers of the Believers,”<sup>39</sup> and as such forbidden to the Muslims so that “no man might marry any of his wives, either such as he should divorce during his lifetime, or such as he should leave widows at his death.”<sup>40</sup>

Muhammad had in all 11 wives and 2 concubines. Khadija and Zainab bint Khuzaima had died before him, and 9 wives and 2 concubines were present at his death.<sup>41</sup>

A short sketch of their lives is being given in the following pages which will relate the circumstance under which they entered Muhammad’s household.

<sup>38</sup> *Quoran*, 33 : 30—34.

<sup>39</sup> *Quoran*, 33 : 6, and *Sale’s Prel. Dis.*, p. 97.

<sup>40</sup> *Quoran*, 33 : 53.

<sup>41</sup> Also see Appendix I.



PART I  
WIVES



# KHADIJA







JANNATUL-MOALLA



THE TOMB OF HAZRET KHADIJA AND OTHERS AT MEDINA.

## KHADIJA

KHADIJA was daughter of Khuwalid, grandson of Asad, grandson of Kosai, Koreishite gentleman of birth and fortune.<sup>1</sup> Before her marriage with Muhammad she had been twice a widow. Her first husband was Abu Halah, and the second was Atiq bin Abad<sup>2</sup> from whom she inherited a considerable substance which had been increased by mercantile stipulations.<sup>3</sup> Added to this, she was comely and nobody born, handsome and fair to behold.

“To the blessings affluence,” says Muir, “she added the more important endowments of discretion, virtue, and an affectionate heart ; and, though mellowed by a more than middle age, she retained a fair and attractive countenance.”<sup>4</sup>

“Though forty,” says another, “she was of fairer countenance than many who were younger, and her personal and other charms had led some of the chief men among the Koreishites to endeavour to

<sup>1</sup> *Muir's Md.*, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> *Bate*, p. 93.

<sup>3</sup> *Wollaston*, p. 31.

<sup>4</sup> *Muir's Md.*, pp. 23-24.

tempt her to renounce the dignified and independent widowhood that she seemed to enjoy. She failed to have affection for any of them aroused in her heart.”<sup>5</sup>

But the noble genius, commanding personality, and mental qualities of Muhammad were so much appreciated by the experienced and judicious Khadija that he rose more and more in her estimation so that her heart began to yearn toward the fresh and comely youth.<sup>6</sup>

No more able to wait, she confided in her sister her longing for Muhammad. Eventually she was sent to make overtures to Muhammad,<sup>8</sup> who readily accepted the proposal and both were married with mutual consent, and thus she made Muhammad master of her person as well as state. Omar bin Asad, Waraka bin Naufil and others attended on Khadija's side, while all the relatives of Muhammad were present at the marriage. Abu Talib, Muhammad's uncle, recited the usual text of the matrimonial union.

<sup>5</sup> *Gilman*, p. 56, also *Muir's Md.*, p. 24.

<sup>6</sup> *Irving*, p. 80.

<sup>8</sup> *Muir's Islam*, p. 21.

It is said that at the time of marriage Muhammad was 25 and Khadija 40, but notwithstanding this disparity of years, the marriage proved eminently a happy and fruitful one, and "Muhammad's house was a model of conjugal happiness and domestic virtue; Khadija made an ideal wife for Muhammad, who was the best of husbands."<sup>10</sup> "Truly, one of the most beautiful pictures of a perfect wedded life that history gives us."<sup>11</sup>

"Khadija must ever rank as one of those good angels who, by their ministry of faith and encouragement, have preserved certain men of genius, in the early days of their work, from despair."<sup>12</sup> According to a tradition: She belied in Muhammad, and in the truth of the revelations, and fortified him in his aims and purposes. She was the first to put an implicit trust in God, His Messenger and in the Revelations, and she entirely surrendered her faith in things divine as well as temporal into the hands of Muhammad. Thereby God had sent Muhammad comfort, for as often as he

<sup>10</sup> *Dermenghem*, p. 52.

<sup>11</sup> *Arnold*, p. 9.

<sup>12</sup> *Leeder*, p. 352.

heard aught disagreeable, contradictory or how he was shown to be a liar, she was sad about it and consoled him to hope. God comforted him through her when he returned to her, in rousing him up in his state of lethargy and in making his burden more light to him, assuring him of her own faith in him, and representing to him the futility of his opponents' babbles.<sup>13</sup>

The amount of Muhammad's love for Khadija may well be guessed by an anecdote related by Abulfeda: His subsequent wife Ayesha one day reproached him with his grief on her account. "Was she not old?" said Ayesha, with the insolence of booming beauty; "has not God given you a younger, a better, and a more beautiful wife in her place?" "More beautiful, truly," said the Prophet "and younger, but not better. There cannot be a better: she believed in me when men despised me, she relieved my wants when I was poor and persecuted."<sup>14</sup>

Khadija was famous by the title of "the chief of women" and she was considered by

<sup>13</sup> *Gilman*, pp. 95-96; *Leeder*, p. 352; *Clarke*, p. 454; and *Davidson*, p. 229.

<sup>14</sup> *Ockley*, p. 17, also *cf. Abulfeda*, pp. 12-17.

Muhammad as one of the only four perfect women who ever lived, other three being Asia, wife of Pharoah, Mary, the mother of Jesus and daughter of Imran, and his beloved daughter Fatima by her.<sup>15</sup>

There were six children born of the marriage—Qasim, Zainab, Roqayya, Fatima, Omm Kulsum, and Abd Manaf who was also called Abdullah, Tayyeb and Taher. The sons died early in infancy, and among daughters only Fatima, wife of Ali, survived.

Khadija had two children by each of her former husbands—one son and a daughter, but they had died before her marriage with Muhammad.

Khadija died in Dec., 619 A.D. in the month of Ramazan when 65 years' of age ; and on her death Muhammad was almost unconsolable and her fond memory made a permanent place in the loving mind of the Prophet.<sup>15a</sup>

“Khadija, his admirable companion,” says Dinet, “who gave herself to him when he was poor and had believed in him when he was called an impostor ; Khadija, to

<sup>15</sup> *Bate*, p. 93; and *Gibbon*, Vol. III. p. 459.

<sup>15a</sup> *Ibn Sa'ad*, Vol. VIII, p. 41.



whom he confided all his hopes ; Khadija, the sweet consoling creature when he was crushed by the weight of despair ; Khadija, the first female Muslim, the 'mother of the believers,' was taken from him by the Fates at the age of 65. Khadija's ascendancy over him was so great and yet so tender that while she lived, he had never been unfaithful. Never, although he was then in the prime of life, would he consent to have other wives or concubines, as permitted by the customs of his country, in spite of being invited on all sides to do so. And never, when Khadija was no more, did he forget her."<sup>16</sup> 19312

Her virtues are still held in great veneration by the Muslims, and her tomb, in the valley above the city is visited to the present day by Muslim pilgrims, especially on Friday mornings. It is enclosed by a square wall, decorated with specimens of some holy verses, while the tombstone has a fine inscription in Kufi character, containing a passage from the Quoran, from the chapter entitled Suret el Kursi.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> *Dinet*, p. 47.

<sup>17</sup> *Burckhardt*, p. 172 ; and *Burton*, Vol. II, p. 249.

**SAUDA**



## SAUDA

LIKE Khadija she was also of Koreishite blood. She was daughter of Zam'ah and wife of Sakran bin Omar, her paternal cousin. The couple had embraced Islam but the husband emigrated to Abyssinia to escape the persecution of his enemies in faith. Sakran died in exile and left his wife pauper and unprovided. Her husband had died, as we have seen, in the cause of Islam, his wife had shared his exile and undergone the ordeals of persecution, and had returned to Mecca destitute and in misery. What was Muhammad's duty at this juncture? Every principle of generosity and humanity dictated him to offer his hand to this lady of mature age.

"According to the custom of the country, marriage was the only means by which the Teacher could protect and help the widow of his faithful disciple and as the only means of assisting the poor woman Muhammad, though straitened for the very means of daily subsistence, married

Sauda," on his return to Taif in February 620 within a few months of Khadija's death, and she had the honour to remain the only wife of Muhammad for three or four years.

She was tall in stature and of robust health. In respect of civil behaviour and liberal habits, she stands next to Ayesha but in obedience and dutifulness, she excelled all the wives of the Prophet.<sup>2</sup> It was on her marriage that the verse on Purdah was revealed at the instance of Omar.<sup>3</sup>

By her first husband she had a son Abdur Rahman who was killed while in active service in the wars under Omar.<sup>4</sup> She survived Muhammad some 10 years, and died in A.H. 54.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Noamani*, p. 324.

<sup>3</sup> *Bokhari*, Vol. I, p. 26.

<sup>4</sup> *Muir's Md.*, p. 113.

**AYESHA**



## AYESHA

AYESHA was the young daughter of Muhammad's bosom friend Abu Bakr, "the Spinster's father," whom he had extracted from the gloom of scepticism. Her father was one of the most powerful, popular and well-to-do citizens. By this alliance Muhammad's principal object was to cement Abu Bakr more strongly to his side.<sup>1</sup>

In response to his politic dictate and in acceptance of the earnest solicitations of his noble disciple, the betrothal was announced when Ayesha was 7 years of age; and she was married over 2 years later when about 10 as such is the ripeness of the climate and such too is the custom of the country.<sup>2</sup> The marriage took place about 9 months after Muhammad's flight to Medina.

As to her person and natural gifts, she was slim and graceful, of ready wit and arch vivacity. This brilliant Ayesha

<sup>1</sup> *Davenport*, p. 25, and *Irving*, p. 70.

<sup>2</sup> *Gibbon*, Vol. III, p. 458, also *cf.* *Ameer Ali*, p. 234, and *Prideaux*, p. 11.



adorned by all manner of qualities would have enthralled even the least sensitive persons.<sup>3</sup>

Her endowments of mind and charms of body gained an enviable ascendancy on the Prophet, so she was exposed to the jealousy of Muhammad's wives who were added to his harem in quick succession.

Once her rivals in the harem had an occasion to assume an air of triumph when she had incurred the suspicion of infidelity and her virtue was transiently blemished. The true story runs thus: In the 6th year of the Hijra when Muhammad had undertaken an expedition against the tribe of Mustaliq, Ayesha also accompanied him. In their return journey Ayesha alighted from her camel and stepped aside on a private occasion. But on her return, perceiving that she had dropped her favourite necklace of Onyxes of Zaffar, which actually belonged to her sister Asma, she retraced back to look for the missing ornament. The bearers imagined her to have got into the litter—as she was slim and light

<sup>3</sup> Carlyle, p. 77; Muir's *Md. and Islam*, p. 81 and his *Md.* P. 178.

they could not make out their mistake—strapped it to the camel and led it away. When she came to the road and to her great surprise found that her camel and attendants were gone, she sat down there expecting that when she was missed, the litter would be brought back to fetch her. It was well-nigh morning, she wrapped her clothes round her and in a little while fell asleep. Early in the morning Safwan bin Moattel, a member of the rear-guard, chanced to pass through where Ayesha lay asleep. He recognised her and exclaimed : *'from God we are and to God we return.'* This startled her up, and without a word being exchanged Safwan set her on his camel and led it after the army overtaking them by noon when they were resting. This accident gave rise to rumours derogatory and ruinous to her character and reputation. In spite of Ayesha's assurance of her innocence, Muhammad was not prepared to change his opinion because censorious mouths had inflamed the matter to the utmost, so even among his staunch adherents it became a topic of malevolence. The Prophet could not get rid of his perplexity on account of

the notorious publicity of such scandal about his favourite wife, until her character was cleared by an oracle from the All-Knowing Allah, the Knower of All things.<sup>4</sup> All the persons connected in spreading the scandal were severely punished in accordance with the injunctions just revealed; and now it was Ayesha's turn to glory over the repudiation of her enemies and slanderers.<sup>5</sup>

As soon as the scandal about her was refuted by the Quoranic verses, she was the same Ayesha as before. She maintained her supremacy, remained queen in the affection of and exercised wonderful influence on the Prophet to the end of his life.<sup>6</sup>

Her name occupies a prominent place amongst the most dignified traditionists. She could offer with ease commentaries on the Holy Book, and had access to the secrets of theology. Over two thousand traditions have been reported by her as heard direct from the mouth of the

<sup>4</sup> Read *Quoran*, 24: 11—14; and *Abulfeda*, pp. 186—99.

<sup>5</sup> *Muir's Md. and Islam*, p. 148 *fn.*; and *Hedayatul Qulub*, Vol. II, Chap. 87, Part II.

<sup>6</sup> *Max Muller*, Part I, p. xxix.

Prophet. She was always praised for her genius. She exercised the influence of a Prince of the Church, and Tirmizi also says that she used to issue *fatawas* (judicial or theological decrees) during the reigns of Abu Bakr, Omar and Osman; and was often consulted on difficult theological and judicial subjects. She read and knew by heart many poems composed by the famous poets of the age; and in addition, she boldly led an army in a battle<sup>7</sup> and her people were heard to say that they had not met a better speaker than Ayesha. She will always remain a sacred personage to a large number of Muslims.

The immortal Gibbon says of her: "She was doubtless a virgin, since Muhammad consummated his nuptials (such is the premature ripeness of the climate) when she was nine years of age. The youth, the beauty, the spirit of Ayesha, gave her a superior ascendant: she was beloved and trusted by the Prophet; and after his death, the daughter of Abu Bakr was long revered as the mother of the faithful."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> *Enc. of Islam*, Vol. I, p. 217; and *Leeder*, p. 364.

<sup>8</sup> *Gibbon*, Vol. III, p. 458.

At Prophet's death she was 18 years old. She survived him some 40 years and died on Tuesday the 17th Ramazan 58 A.H. ; and according to her last desire she was buried the same night in al-Baki at Medina.

**HAFSA**



## HAFSA

HAFSA was daughter of Omar and widow of Khonais bin Hozafa, an early convert to Islam who was killed at the battle of Badr.<sup>1</sup> Omar first made a proposal to Abu Bakr but he was not moved by the tempting beauty of the widow, and declined.

About the same time the death of Prophet's daughter Roqaiya had been profoundly deplored by her husband Osman. Just to console him, Omar, his friend and brother in arms, offered Hafsa's hand. But he also dreaded her fiery temper and refused to make her partner of his life.<sup>2</sup>

This was a direct indignity to Hafsa as well as to her father. So Omar complained of it to the Prophet. "Be not grieved, Omar," replied Prophet, "a better wife is destined for Osman and a better husband for thy daughter." He gave his own daughter to Osman and took the fair Hafsa to wife himself within 6 months of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Zarqani*, Vol. III, p. 270.

<sup>2</sup> *Dinet*, p. 82; *Ameer Ali*, pp. 234-85; and *Sahih-Bokhari*, Vol. II, p. 780.



the death of her husband in the 3rd year of the Hijra.

She was then about 21 years of age, and after this politic marriage, all three—Omar, Abu Bakr and Osman—were similarly bound in closer friendship with Muhammad.<sup>3</sup>

Thus he became son-in-law as well as father-in-law of the principal men of his party, and bound them more closely to his interest.<sup>4</sup>

There was a great rivalry between her and Ayesha who, however, succeeded in maintaining her supremacy, and Hafsa was next to her in favour and ascendancy. She was very punctilious in the observance of religious obligations, such as fasting, prayer, etc.<sup>5</sup> Hafsa made a trusty confidant to Muhammad so that she was entrusted with the coffer containing such precious documents and records as the chapters and verses of the Holy Quoran as they were revealed, and its compilation

<sup>3</sup> *Muir's Md. and Islam*, p. 116; and his *Md.*, p. 250; *Bate*, p. 95; and *Enc. of Islam*, Vol. II, p. 216.

<sup>4</sup> *Prideaux*, p. 53.

<sup>5</sup> *Cf. Qasas-ul-Anmbia*.

remained as the standard text until the reign of Osman.<sup>6</sup>

Muhammad had no issue by this marriage also. Hafsa survived Muhammad some 25 years and died in 45 A.H., in the reign of Moawiya, at the age of 63.

<sup>6</sup> *Irving*, p. 128; *Leeder*, p. 364; and *Muir's Caliphate*, p. 152.



**ZAINAB BINT  
KHUZAIMA**



## ZAINAB

A YEAR after Muhammad's marriage with Hafsa, he took to wife Zainab, daughter of Khuzaima and widow of his cousin Obaidullah, who was slain at the battle of Badr. She was married thrice before. Her first husband was Tufail bin Haris who divorced her. Then his brother Obaidullah bin Haris married her. After Obaidullah's death at Badr she was married to Abdullah bin Jahash who was killed in the battle of Ohod. Lastly, having no relations or means to protect her, she entered the harem of Muhammad in the 9th month of the 4th year of Hijra.<sup>1</sup> She lived only a month or two and like Khadija she also died several years before her husband's death in Hijra 11. She had no children by any of her husbands.

She was noted for her generous and charitable disposition towards the destitute converts and the needy. Her benevolence and kindly treatment of the poor

<sup>1</sup> *Bate*, p. 95.

earned her the surname of “Ommul-Masakin” or Mother of the Poor.<sup>2</sup>

She died in her 30th year of age in 4 A.H.

<sup>2</sup> *Hughes*, (ii) p. 399.

OMM SALMA





## OMM SALMA

A FEW weeks after Muhammad's marriage to Zainab bin Khuzaima, he was obliged to extend his protection by marriage to his paternal cousin Omm Salma, daughter of Abi Ommayya, and widow of Abu Salmah, one of the refugees who had succumbed to his injuries received at Ohod.<sup>1</sup> Thus bereft of her natural protector, she was unable to maintain herself, much less her four children, which she has by her deceased husband. Although a little advanced in years, she was still a charming lady. Her distress and a rising family closed on her the doors of even most hospitable relatives. As she was Muhammad's relation and wife of one who had died in the service of Islam, it would have been a slight to the Prophet's dignity and benevolence had she been allowed to knock about from door to door unprovided and unsheltered.

Now it was Muhammad's duty to espouse her and take the children under his care.<sup>2</sup>

\* <sup>1</sup> *Bate*, p. 95.

<sup>2</sup> *Muir's Md. and Islam*, p. 140.

The marriage took place in the 4th year of Hijra. She had no issue by Muhammad; and her son Omar fought under Ali in the battle of Jamal and was later made chief of Bahrain.<sup>3</sup> She is said to have survived all the wives of the Prophet and lived upto the 59th year of the Hijra, and died 84 years of age.

She is also, like Ayesha, famous for her wit and wisdom, learning and intellectual superiority.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> *Heyatul-Qulub*, Vol. II, Chap. 52.

<sup>4</sup> *Tabaqat Ibn Sa'ad*, pp. II, p. 126.

# ZAINAB BINT JAHSH



## ZAINAB BINT JAHSH

ZAINAB was daughter of Jahsh descended from two of the noblest families of Arabia. She was Muhammad's cousin, being a daughter of Amina, a sister of his father Abdullah. Muhammad having a great esteem for this young maiden of high birth, married her to his equally attached friend and adopted son Zaid. "Proud of her birth, and perhaps of her beauty, her marriage with a freedman rankled in her breast. Mutual aversion at last culminated in disgust."<sup>1</sup> Thus the marriage proved to be wholly an unhappy one. Zaid, determined upon a divorce, approached Muhammad and expressed his intention. "Why," demanded Muhammad, "hast thou found any fault with her?" "No," replied Zaid, "but I can no longer live with her." Thereupon the Prophet peremptorily said, "Go and guard your wife ; treat her well and fear, God for God has said 'Take care of your wives, and fear the Lord !' "<sup>2</sup>

But Zaid did not change his mind

<sup>1</sup> *Ameer Ali*, p. 285.

<sup>2</sup> *Quoran* and also *cf. Ameer Ali*, p. 286.

and divorced Zainab notwithstanding Muhammad's commands and remonstrances.<sup>3</sup>

Muhammad had a conscientious grief at the conduct of Zaid as it was he who had originally recommended and arranged the marriage.<sup>4</sup>

As soon as Zainab was free, she commenced imploring Muhammad to make meet reparation by marrying her himself and she never ceased intriguing unless she gained her ends in the 5th year of Hijra.

Zainab, thereon becoming the wife of Muhammad, lived with him to the time of his death, always glorying and vaunting herself above his other wives, that whereas they were married to Muhammad by their parents and kinsfolk, she was married to him by God himself, who dwells above the Seven Heavens.<sup>5</sup>

The marriage with Zainab, after her divorce from his adopted son Zaid, raised an outcry among his contemporaries as they considered an adopted son as a real one of their body. So Muhammad abo-

<sup>3</sup> Davenport, p. 85; and Ameer Ali, p. 286.

<sup>4</sup> Diniet, p. 90.

<sup>5</sup> Prideaux, pp. 148-49.

lished this by marrying her and set an example that an adopted son is not to be looked upon as a real son, little for his own interest but for the benefit of his country at large.<sup>6</sup>

Read the Quoranic injunctions revealed about it: “. . . nor hath he made your adopted sons your true sons . . . Call *such as are adopted* sons of their *natural* fathers. But when Zaid had determined the matter concerning her, *and had resolved to divorce her*, we joined her in marriage unto thee ; lest a crime should be *charged* on the true believers, in *marrying* the wives of their adopted sons, when they have determined the matter concerning them ; and the command of God is to be performed. No crime is *to be charged* on the Prophet, as to what God hath allowed him . . . .”<sup>7</sup>

The tears and distress of Zainab on one hand, and the strong sense of duty and good to his land on another, prompted Muhammad to overcome the objections of his countrymen and followers, and forget

<sup>6</sup> Bosworth Smith, pp. 114-15; and Max Muller, Part II, P. 189.

<sup>7</sup> Quoran, 33, 37-38.



the interest of his reputation and he married the divorced wife of Zaid, his enfranchised slave and adopted son.

She was devout and pious, and given to prayer. She was contented and known for her generosity. By dint of her arms and labour she would obtain considerable substance, and distribute it in the name of Allah.<sup>8</sup>

She also did childness in A.H. 20 at the age of 53.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. *Noamani*, p. 331.

**JUWAIRIYAH**



## JUWAIRIYAH

JUWAIRIYAH was the daughter of Haris, a chief of the tribe of Bani Mustaliq. A damsel of birth and beauty, she was married to her unfortunate paternal cousin, Ziul Shefrain, who was killed in the battle of Bani Mustaliq. She was taken a prisoner by a Muslim soldier, Ibn Qais and brought down to Medina.<sup>1</sup>

When she requested her captor to set her free he fixed her ransom at 9 ounces of gold.<sup>2</sup> She was in exile, a captive and shorn from friends and relatives in a foreign land; and unable to procure the stipulated amount to purchase her freedom, applied to Muhammad for help in fulfilling the agreement which she had made with that soldier and citizen of Medina. Muhammad readily responded to her call for deliverance and immediately arranged the payment of the sum. She was filled with an inexpressible gratitude for her liberty, and in recognition of this singular act of kindness and generosity to

<sup>1</sup> *Muir's Md.*, p. 28; and *Bate*, p. 96.

<sup>2</sup> *Hughes*, (ii) p. 899; and *Majmaul Bihar*, p. 528.

a captive and foreigner, she at once offered her hand to Muhammad, and they were married in the 5th year of the Hijra. The tidings of this alliance soon spread among the Muslims and they said: "The Prophet hath allied himself to the Bani Mustaliq. We must therefore look upon them as our allies." They considered it humiliating to keep in bondage his wife's relatives and tribesmen. So each victor hastened to release the captives and returned all the booty gained in the expedition. Thus some two hundred families regained their liberty, and all blessed the marriage of Juwairiyah and Muhammad and wished the couple all that is good and desirable.<sup>3</sup>

It is related that Ayesha said: "No woman was ever a greater blessing to her people than this Juwairiyah."

At the time of her marriage with Muhammad she was about 17, and died in the 56th year of Hijra at 68 years of age.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibn Hisham*, p. 729; *Ameer Ali*, pp. 236-37; and *Hedayatul Qulub*, Vol. II, Chap. 37.

**SAFIA**



## SAFIA

AMONG the wives of the Prophet there was also a Jewess named Safia, a descendant of the race of the priests and princess of Bani Quraiza, and daughter of Hayi ibn Akhtah. Her first husband, Salam bin Skikam, divorced her and the second husband, Kinana bin Rabi, the Jewish chief, was killed in Khaibar.

She was married to Muhammad in the 7th year of Hijra and surviving him some 25 years, died childless in the 36th year of the Hijra at the age of 63.

This marriage secured for Islam the friendship and support of many chiefs of Jewish tribes.

At her marriage with Muhammad she was a beautiful damsel of 18 and she was one of the most favoured wives of Muhammad. It was for her that the Prophet bowed his knee to help her into the litter.<sup>1</sup> This roused the jealousy of Muhammad's other wives, especially of the

<sup>1</sup> *Muir's Md.* p. 155, and his *Md. and Islam*, p. 187.



young Ayesha and her confidante Hafsa. They used often to abuse her, and constantly taunt her by naming "Ye daughter of the Jew." Safia complained of this to Muhammad who said, "Why did not you also rejoin?" "What could I say, oh Prophet?" said she enquiringly. "When they taunt you in future," said the Prophet "tell them 'Aron, the apostle of God is my father, Moses, the speech of God, is my uncle, and Muhammad, the Prophet of Allah, is my husband.' Then what can you deny thereof; and what makes you both hold me in contempt?" Upon this sharp rejoinder of Safia both of them said: "Certainly these are not your own words and the Prophet taught you this."<sup>2</sup>

To put an end to this and silence them a revelation came with especial reference to the impolite words used by them. "O true believers, let not men laugh *other* men to scorn, who peradventure may be better than themselves; neither *let* women laugh *other* women to *scorn*; who may possibly be better than themselves.

<sup>2</sup> *Hedayatul Qulub*, Vol. II, Chap. 52; *Tirmizi*, p. 478; and *Masud Ibn Hanmbal*, Vol. VI, p. 95.

Neither defame one another ; nor call one another by *opprobrious* appellation.”<sup>3</sup>

She died in A.H. 36.

<sup>3</sup> Quoran, 49: 11.



**OMM HABIBA**



## OMM HABIBA

OMM HABIBA was the daughter of Muhammad's arch enemy Abu Sofian and widow of Obaidullah, one of the "Four Enquirers," and a maternal cousin of Muhammad, who after emigrating to Abyssinia became a convert to Christianity and died there.<sup>1</sup> She was betrothed by Negus, the Christian Prince, and this comely widow of 30 was among the residue of the fugitives who arrived from Abyssinia.<sup>2</sup>

Like many of the previous marriages of Muhammad this was also contracted out of a politic consideration to soften the hostility of her father Abu Sofian and reward her fidelity in remaining steadfast to Islam.<sup>3</sup>

"The Prophet was moved," writes Wollaston, "by motives of policy to add the lady to his long list of spouses, hoping that she might thereby be enabled to soften, in some measure, the animosity of

<sup>1</sup> *Hughes*, ii p. 399.

<sup>2</sup> *Muir's Md.*, p. 372.

<sup>3</sup> *Muir's Md. and Islam*, p. 182 ; and *Irving*, p. 155.

her father, a bitter, unrelenting, and withal powerful opponent of the faith of Islam.”<sup>4</sup>

She was married to Muhammad at Medina in the 7th year of Hijra. By this union too Muhammad had no issue, but she had born to her former husband a daughter named Habiba.<sup>5</sup> She died in 44 Hijra at the age of 67.

<sup>4</sup> *Wollaston*, p. 82.

<sup>5</sup> *Bate*, p. 97.

**MAIMUNA**





## MAIMUNA

MAIMUNA whom Muhammad married at Mecca was his kinswoman, daughter of Haris and sister-in-law to his uncle Ibn Abbas through whom the marriage was negotiated. This was her third marriage and she was 51 years of age at the time.<sup>1</sup> "This was doubtless," says Muir, "another marriage of policy, for Maimuna was 51 years of age, and a widow, but the connection gained him two powerful proselytes."<sup>2</sup> One was the widow's nephew Khaled bin Waleed, an intrepid warrior, who led the Koreish cavalry in the destructive battle of Ohod. When he was bound by the ties of relationship with Muhammad, he became one of the most victorious champions to the cause of Islam. His prowess won him the appellation of "The Sword of God," and in later times he became the conqueror of the Greeks.<sup>3</sup>

The other was Amru Ibn al Aas, who did all he could to thwart the scheme of

<sup>1</sup> *Hughes*, (ii) p. 808.

<sup>2</sup> *Muir's Md.* p. 890.

<sup>3</sup> *Ameer Ali*, p. 237.

Muhammad at the advent of the Prophet of Allah. In later years he, too, like Waleed, was "destined with his sword to carry victoriously into foreign lands the faith he had once so strenuously opposed."<sup>4</sup>

She was childless in all her marriages. She is said to have been the last wife of Muhammad and survived him many years. She died in the 38th year of Hijra, aged 80. She was by her desire buried on the same spot (Sarf) where the Prophet had welcomed her as his bride, and her tomb is still visited at Wadi Fatima.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Irving, and Muir's *Md.* p. 161.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibn Hisham*, p. 790, also *Tabari*, i. 1595.

**PART II**  
**CONCUBINES**



**RAIHANA**



## RAIHANA

RAIHANA was one of the two concubines of the Prophet. She was a jewess whose husband perished in the massacre of Bani Quraiza in the 5th year of the Hijra. Muhammad offered his protection by asking her hand in marriage. But the loss of husband and relations was aching her heart and while declining to be a Muslim, she preferred to remain his hand-maid.<sup>1</sup>

Having passed some time in close contact with the professors of Islamic creed, the thoughtful jewess on closer examination found no diametrical opposition or any fundamental difference between Islam and Judaism. She found that minus later interpolations in Jewish religion of the time one was as good as the other, and she embraced Islam; and died in the profession of that faith.<sup>2</sup>

Nothing more is known of her as to what was her age when she entered Muhammad's harem, and what position she occupied

<sup>1</sup> *Muir's Md. and Islam*, p. 168.

<sup>2</sup> *Hughes*, (ii) p. 899, and *Majmaul Bihar*, p. 528.



in the Prophet's household, and when she died, as there has been little or no mention of her name along with those of the other members of Muhammad's family. but from reliable authorities it is understood that Muhammad had 13 wives and 2 concubines, and we get also that 9 wives, and 2 concubines were living at Prophet's death. So she must be one of the two concubines to survive, as Mary, it is definite, survived Muhammad.

# MARY THE COPT



## MARY THE COPT

MARY and her sister Shirin were sent to Muhammad as a gift by al-Muqanuq, the Roman Governor at Alexandria in Egypt. Both of them belonged to Christianity. Mary was distinguished by her beauty, fair complexion, delicate features, black curly hair. Muhammad kept her for himself, and bestowed her sister upon Hassan, the famous poet of his generals.<sup>1</sup>

Once an interesting conjugal altercation occurred in Muhammad's harem. Muhammad had allotted to each of his wives a particular night and used to visit them by turn. Mary discharged the duties of a hand-maid wherever Muhammad stayed. He was Hafsa's house, but she was away on some errand but soon returned to find Muhammad in the company of that Coptic girl. Hafsa was filled with indignation and rage at Muhammad's having lain with a slave of his, but Muhammad wished to silence her by taking an oath that he would no more offer

<sup>1</sup> *Bate*, p. 98.

such favours on Mary and would consider her henceforth as forbidden to him.<sup>2</sup>

But soon this domestic catastrophe was averted by a revelation from Allah: "O Prophet, why holdest thou that to be prohibited which God hath allowed thee, seeking to please thy wives; since God is inclined to forgive, and be merciful? God hath allowed you the dissolution of your oaths: and God is your master; and He is knowing *and* wise."<sup>3</sup>

A domestic occurrence of great consequence to Muhammad rested with this Coptic concubine. In the 8th year of Hijra, shortly after the return of the army from Taif, she gave birth to a son who was named Ibrahim. Muhammad was filled with joy untold at the prospect of having a mission. This gave a decided ascendance to Mary on all the wives of the Prophet, but some 16 months later, Muhammad wept on the grave of Ibrahim, his only hope and solace of the last days of his chequered life marked with so many incidents and accidents.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *Sule*, p. 456fn; also *cf. Hedayatul Qulub*, Vol. II, p. 940.

<sup>3</sup> *Quoran*, 66: 1.

<sup>4</sup> *Muir's Md. and Islam*, p. 218, and his *Caliphate*, p. 5.

Mary survived Muhammad some five years and died at Medina in the 16th year of Hijra. She was also buried in the usual burying-place, known as al-Baki.



## APPENDIX I

### SUCCESSION OF WIVES

According to the general consent and reliable authorities of Eastern writers, whose works form the basis of Western opinion, Muhammad had in all 15 women in his harem, but with two of them he had no conjugal intercourses. So he had only 13 wives including the two concubines, Raihana and Mary the Copt. Zainab bint Khuzaimah also, like Khadija had died before the Prophet. Thus there were only 9 wives and 2 concubines at the time of his death.<sup>1</sup>

Khadija was married to Muhammad in 27 B.H.<sup>2</sup> (595 A.D.). When she died in 3 B.H. (December, 619 A.D.) Muhammad married Sauda in 2 B.H. (February, 620 A.D.) within three months of Khadija's death. Betrothed to Ayesha about the same time but marriage did not take place

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Sahih Bokhari*, p. 798; *Majmaul Bihar*, p. 528; and *Hedayatul Qulub*, Vol. II, Chap. 52.

<sup>2</sup> Although the introduction of B. H. (for Before Hijra) will appear to be a novelty but if it is accepted and coupled with A. H. (After Hijra) as B. C. and A. D. go together in computation of years, I think, this form of reckoning dates will also be equally convenient and useful. Muhammad was married to Khadija in 595 A. D. and the Hijra occurred in 622 A. D. According to this marriage took place 27 years Before Hijra, i.e., in 27 B. H.



until 7 months after the Hijra in 622 A.D. Married to Hafsa in A.H. 3 (624 A.D.). About a year later to Zainab bin Khuzaima in 4 A.H. (December, 625 A.D.) and a month later to Salma (January, 626 A.D.), Six months afterwards to Zainab, daughter of Jahsh, A.H. 4 (June, 626 A.D.). To Juwairiya in 5 A.H. (December, 626 A.D.) and about this time took Raihana as concubine (627 A.D.). In 7 A.H. (August, 628 A.D.) took Mary as concubine before betrothal to Habiba and also married Safia (after the betrothal with Habiba) in 7 A.H. (August, 628 A.D.). His last wife was Maimuna in 7 A.H. (629 A.D.).

Khadija and Zainab bint Khuzaima had died before Muhammad. Zainab bint Jahsh died in the reign of Omar (A.H. 18-23). Safia and Maimuna died one after another in the reign of Ali (A.H. 35-40); and the rest of them died in the reign of Moawiyah I (A.H. 40-60). After the 4th year of his reign, Habiba and Mary died within an interval of 5 years. Then within the next 5 years Hafsa, Juwairiya and Ayesha. Sauda, surviving all the wives of the Prophet, died about the end of Moawiyah's reign.

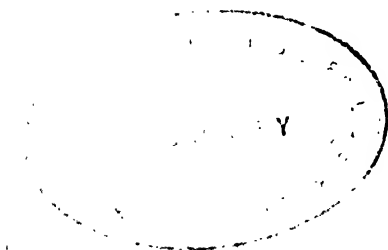
## APPENDIX II

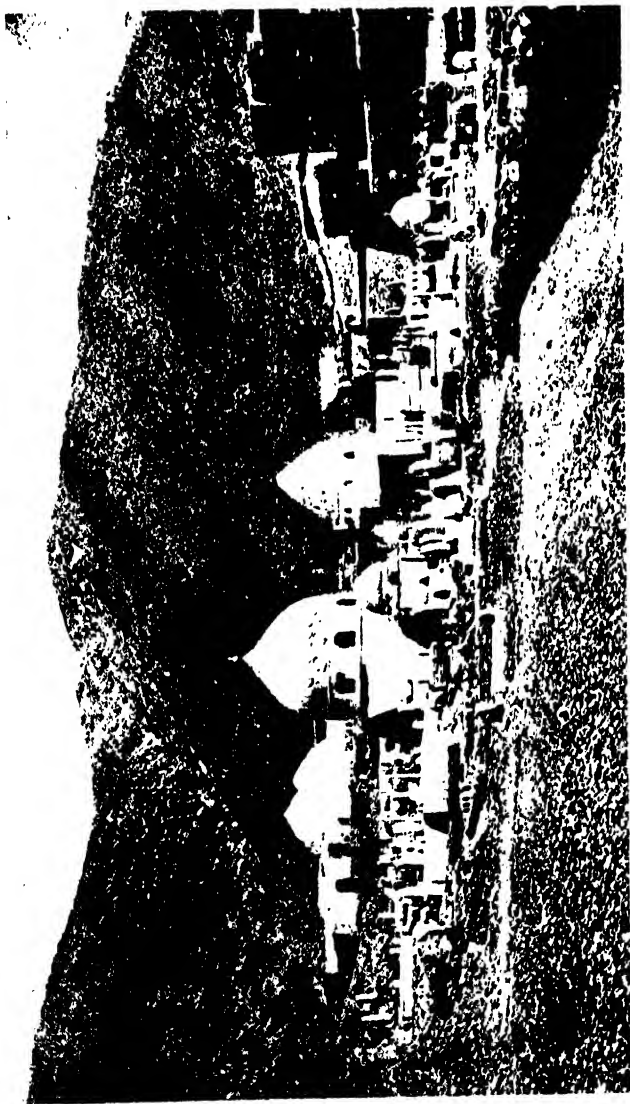
### MUHAMMAD'S CHILDREN

All the wives of Muhammad excepting Khadija and Mary were unfruitful. Khadija gave birth to 6 children, eldest and the youngest being sons and the rest daughter : Qasim, Zainab, Ruqaiya, Omma Kulsum, Fatima and Abudullah, also known as Tayyeb and Taher. After the birth of the first son Muhammad was called Abul Qasim (father of Qasim). But the sons died in infancy. Only the daughters grew up to be married. Zainab was married to Abul Aas bin Rabia, and she died in a few years before Muhammad's death. Ruqaiya was married to Osman. She also died in 2 A.H. Sometime after her death Omma Kulsum was also married to Osman. She died in 9 A.H. Fatima, the youngest of the daughters, was married to Ali. She was the only child of the Prophet to survive but not long. On the death of her father, she sustained a broken heart and died a few months after the death of Muhammad.

Ibrahim was Muhammad's last child born of Mary. This child also died in

10 A.H., some 6 months before the light of prophecy was extinct in the person of Muhammad.





THE TOMBS OF THE WIVES AND CHILDREN OF THE PROPHET AT MEDINA.



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